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112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Wisconsin National Guard

Alaska support unit gains real-world scenario training

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — As Exercise Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014 commence, Soldiers of the 207th Brigade Support Company launched their mission of establishing an Alaska Medical Station (AMS).

The Anchorage-based unit was in charge of transporting the AMS from a storage facility here to Raven Hall at the Palmer Fairgrounds.

The mission of transporting supplies and equipment is something the unit conducts consistently during drills and annual training, explained Staff Sgt. David Gulley of the 207th BSC.

Gulley also stated that, if the unit is called upon to respond to an actual major disaster, the 207th will be able to draw on the experiences gained from this exercise to do what is needed.

Alaska Shield 2014 tests the ability of federal, state, local tribal and other officials to share information, achieve a common situational awareness and communicate safety information to the public.

Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014 is a statewide Alaska National Guard exercise testing national, state and local agencies on their ability to respond to a major earthquake and tsunami scenario and provide emergency assistance.

"It's testing our readiness and availability of our Soldiers and how quick we can respond to a natural disaster," said Gulley.

Another goal of this exercise is for the various agencies to coordinate with each other and provide a combined effort to assist those affected by the disaster.

"As a National Guard, I believe that's what we should be doing," said Sgt. Geoffrey Hansen. "We do work for the state, so we should be working with civilian agencies."

Gulley said that working with local agencies was going to be a test for the unit and it would be a benefit for the Soldiers to experience.

"This is as close to real world as you can get," said Gulley. "With the other agencies and our Soldiers interacting with them, I think this is the best type of training we can get."

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Photo Cutlines:

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Spc. Crystal Roseman (left) and Sgt. Geoffrey Hansen with the 207th Brigade Support Company secure cargo of medical supplies before transporting it to the Palmer Fairgrounds during the Alaska Shield Vigilant Guard exercise, Alaska, March 27. This is a statewide exercise involving national, state and local agencies designed to test the response and coordination of different agencies in a disaster scenario modeled after the 1964 earthquake and subsequent tsunami that ravaged Alaska. U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Megan Leuck

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Staff Sgt. David Gulley with the 207th Brigade Support Company explains the layout of the Alaska Medical Station at Raven Hall in Palmer Fairgrounds during the Alaska Shield Vigilant Guard exercise, Alaska, March 27. This is a statewide exercise involving national, state and local agencies designed to test the response and coordination of different agencies in a disaster scenario modeled after the 1964 earthquake and subsequent tsunami that ravaged Alaska. U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Megan Leuck

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Spc. Kekoa Macloves with the 207th Brigade Support Company operates a forklift to unload equipment for the Alaska Medical Station at Raven Hall in Palmer Fairgrounds during the Alaska Shield Vigilant Guard exercise, Alaska, March 27. This is a statewide exercise involving national, state and local agencies designed to test the response and coordination of different agencies in a disaster scenario modeled after the 1964 earthquake and subsequent tsunami that ravaged Alaska. U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Megan Leuck

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Spc. Kekoa Macloves with the 207th Brigade Support Company operates a forklift to unload equipment for the Alaska Medical Station at Raven Hall in Palmer Fairgrounds during the Alaska Shield Vigilant Guard exercise, Alaska, March 27. This is a statewide exercise involving national, state and local agencies designed to test the response and coordination of different agencies in a disaster scenario modeled after the 1964 earthquake and subsequent tsunami that ravaged Alaska. U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Megan Leuck